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The Etiquette of HADITH

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EVALUATION (1)

**Hadrat Aqdas Maulānā Arshad Madanī Sāhib
dāmat barakātuhum
Ustādh Hadīth, Dār al-'Ulūm Deoband**

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
أَحْمَدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ، وَالصَّلَاةِ وَالسَّلَامِ عَلَى سَيِّدِ الْمُرْسَلِينَ، وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَأَصْحَابِهِ
أَجْمَعِينَ

The science of Hadīth is the most honourable of all sciences. It is an important pillar of *Dīn*. It's theme centres around the being and attributes of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam. Hadīth is defined as the words, actions and tacit approvals of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam. This means that the science of Hadīth is connected to the pure life of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam from beginning to end. Without this science, neither is the *tafsīr* (exegesis) of the Qur'ān possible, nor the codification of *fiqh* (jurisprudence). This is why the '*ulamā*' of every era considered service to this science and attachment to it to be a means of success for them in both worlds. From the very early centuries of Islam, certain principles and rules were laid down for the preservation of Hadīth, and through which the rank of each Hadīth could be delineated, and the status of the rules of the Sharī'ah which were derived from it could be established.

Allāh *ta'ālā* willed the termination of the chain of prophet-hood with our master, Hadrat Muhammad sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam, and no

Prophet was to come after him until the day of Resurrection. This is why the preservation of this science of Hadīth was undertaken in a very distinguished manner. We will not be exaggerating in the least if we said that no other nation could preserve the words, actions and tacit approvals of the Prophet which was commissioned to it. Allāh *ta'ālā* enabled this important task to be undertaken and fulfilled only by the *ummah* of Muḥammad *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* so that this *Dīn* may be preserved until the day of Resurrection.

From the above explanation, the importance of the science of Hadīth and it's need for the continued existence of this final *Dīn* can be clearly gauged. It is therefore most important for the students who are studying this science, and who are also the inheritors of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*, to be fully aware of the etiquette of the science of Hadīth, and to observe it's etiquette. As the saying goes: "The one who has manners and etiquette, he is most fortunate. The one who is deprived of this is most unfortunate."

It has also been witnessed that the more devoted and sincere a person is with this science, and the more respect he shows to it, the stronger his spiritual bond with Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*.

The associates of Hadrat Maulānā Muḥammad Salīm Dhorāt Sāhib *mudda zilluhu* penned down a lesson which he had delivered from a tape recording. They then published it as a short but

beneficial booklet titled, *Ādāb-e-Ḥadīth* (*The Etiquette of Ḥadīth*). I had the opportunity of perusing through it in the course of my journey and found it most beneficial especially for students.

I make *du'ā'* to Allāh *ta'ālā* to bestow this blessed work with acceptance, and to enable the students of Ḥadīth to take maximum benefit from it. Āmīn.

(Ḥadrat Aqdas Maulānā) Arshad Madanī (Ṣāhib *dāmat barakātuhum*)

Servant of Dār al-'Ulūm Deoband
29 Rabī' al-Ākhir 1430 A.H.

EVALUATION (2)

Hadrat Aqdas Maulānā Hāshim Jaugwārī Sāhib
dāmat barakātuhum

Khalifah of Hadrat Shaykh al-Hadīth Hadrat
Maulānā Muḥammad Zakariyyā Sāhib
nawwarallāhu marqadahu

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ وَكَفَى، وَسَلَامٌ عَلَى عِبَادِهِ الَّذِينَ اصْطَفَى

I heard this entire lesson of Maulānā Muḥammad Salīm Sāhib *mudda zilluhu* on the subject of etiquette. May Allāh *ta'ālā* enable us to appreciate it.

This entire lesson deals with etiquette. The honourable students must make it an “amulet” and do their utmost to practise on it. It is only through etiquette (*ādāb*) that a person is bestowed with knowledge. It is stated in *Akhlāq Muḥsinī*:

“The inspiration to adhere to etiquette is from Allāh *ta'ālā*. The person who does not have etiquette is really deprived of Allāh’s grace.”

It is essential to bear in mind the etiquette which he outlined irrespective of whether they are with regard to one’s teachers, the books [of *Hadīth*], or the Muḥaddithīn (*Hadīth* scholars and compilers). The students must study these etiquette attentively, and try to practise on them. If not, the wealth of knowledge will not be acquired. May Allāh *ta'ālā* engrain the desire to consider these etiquette in the hearts of one and all.

It is essential to consider all etiquette – external and internal. The Sufis state that the essence of Sufism is in etiquette.

التَّصَوُّفُ كُلُّهُ آدَابٌ

Taṣawwuf in it's entirety is etiquette.

It is therefore most essential to save one's self from being disrespectful. If not, there will be nothing but deprivation.

This booklet must be studied with due importance so that one may learn the different etiquette for each occasion and place. By practising on these, a person will be able to acquire internal and external perfection. May Allāh *ta'ālā* also inspire me to practise on these etiquette, and the reader as well.

وَمَا تَوْفِيقِي إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ، عَلَيْهِ تَوَكَّلْتُ وَإِلَيْهِ الْمَرْجِعُ وَالْمَأْبُتُ

(Hadrat Aqdas Maulānā) Hāshim (Sāhib *dāmat barakātuhum*)

19 Rabī' ath-Thānī 1430 A.H.

EVALUATION (3)

**Hadrat Maulānā 'Atīq Ahmad Bastawī Sāhib
dāmat barakātuhum
Ustādh of Hadīth, Dār al-'Ulūm Nadwatul
'Ulamā'**

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

أَحْمَدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ، وَالصَّلَاةِ وَالسَّلَامِ عَلَى سَيِّدِ الْمُرْسَلِينَ وَخَاتَمِ النَّبِيِّينَ، مُحَمَّدٍ
بْنِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ، وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَأَصْحَابِهِ أَجْمَعِينَ.

We are most grateful to Allāh *ta'ālā* for having allowed the system of free *Dīnī makātib* (primary Islamic schools), *madāris* (secondary Islamic schools) and *jāmi'āt* (higher centres of Islamic learning) to expand and broaden by the day. These have expanded from the subcontinent (India, Pakistan, Bangladesh) and spread to Britain, South Africa, America, Canada, etc. where very high centres of Islamic learning have been established, and where, like the Subcontinent, education to the level of *Daurah-e-Hadīth* (final year of the 'ālim course) is being imparted.

While the number of *madāris* and crowds of students are increasing by the day, it is a bitter fact that the level of education and moral training is dropping very swiftly. While there may be a rise in quantity, there is a drop in quality. However, we are grateful to Allāh *ta'ālā* that a perception of responsibilities and consciousness in this regard is still existent among the elders, administrators and teachers of these *madāris*. Wherever we

happen to go, we find a concern and a passion to improve the dropping standards in the education and moral training of the students.

A major cause for the drop in the standards in an absence of purpose and objective in the students, lack of sincerity, and distance from the etiquette of seeking knowledge. There is a need to blow a new spirit of sincerity and specialization in our *madāris*. This task can only be undertaken by sincere and experienced teachers.

An important link in this golden chain is the booklet before you, *The Etiquette of Hadīth*, of Hadrat Maulānā Muḥammad Salīm Dhorāt Sāhib *dāmat barakātuhum*; in which he presents the internal and external etiquette of seeking Islamic sciences – especially the science of Hadīth – in a very simple and effective style. May Allāh *ta'ālā* bless Hadrat Maulānā in his life and health, and may He enable him and his associates to continue their efforts and services in the fields of education, moral training, reformation and rectification.

Hadrat Maulānā Muḥammad Salīm Dhorāt *dāmat barakātuhum* is from among the elite '*ulamā*' of Britain whom Allāh *ta'ālā* inspired to render various services to the *Dīn* and for the propagation of Islam, and in whose services He placed a lot of blessings. He had established the Islamic Da'wah Academy in the famous British city of Leicester, where he commenced the task of training the youth, providing them with an Islamic environment, and giving them an Islamic identity. This "seed" which he planted has now

appeared as a fully grown, shady and fruit-bearing tree. He then established Riyāḍ al-'Ulūm under the auspices of his Da'wah Academy. Riyāḍ al-'Ulūm (the gardens of knowledge) really seems to be Riyāḍ aṣ-Ṣāliḥīn (gardens of the righteous). I had the good fortune of visiting this *madrasah* on several occasions, and had the opportunity of addressing the male and female students. My heart was very much delighted at observing the effulgent and spiritual atmosphere at the *madrasah* and the Academy, and have many high hopes for it. *Inshā Allāh*, Allāh *ta'ālā* will enable the graduates of this *madrasah*, and the brothers and sisters who benefited from it to carry out the responsibilities of education, moral training and propagation throughout the West (Europe and America). *Inshā Allāh*, this *madrasah* will serve as a lighthouse for the West, and a *Dīnī* and *da'watī* (religious and propagational) powerhouse.

The book under review, *The Etiquette of Ḥadīth*, is actually a lesson which he delivered to the students of Ḥadīth at Madrasah Riyāḍ al-'Ulūm before the commencement of their Ḥadīth studies. This address is like a shore-less ocean [in the information it contains]. *Inshā Allāh*, by studying *The Etiquette of Ḥadīth*, the male and female students of the *Dīnī madāris* will develop a purpose, a genuine enthusiasm and spirit. By practising on these etiquette, the level of education and moral training will improve.

I make *du'ā'* to Allāh *ta'ālā* to accept this booklet, and to make it most beneficial to the male and female students, and to all readers.

(Hadrat Maulānā) 'Atīq Ahmad Qāsīmī (Sāhib *dāmat barakātuhum*)

During his stay at Musjid Hirā, Dewsbury, Britain
18 June 2009

THE ETIQUETTE OF HADĪTH

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ وَكَفَى وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى سَيِّدِ الرُّسُلِ وَخَاتَمِ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ، وَعَلَى آلِهِ
الْأَصْفِيَاءِ، وَأَصْحَابِهِ الْأَتْقِيَاءِ.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ: فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: الرَّاحِمُونَ يَرْحَمُهُمُ الرَّحْمَنُ تَبَارَكَ
وَتَعَالَى. لِرَحْمَتِهِ مَنْ فِي الْأَرْضِ يَرْحَمُكُمْ مَنْ فِي السَّمَاءِ (رَوَاهُ أَبُو دَاوُدَ، وَالتِّرْمِذِيُّ،
وَإِسْحَاقُ). أَوْ كَمَا قَالَ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. سُبْحَانَكَ لَا عِلْمَ لَنَا إِلَّا مَا عَلَّمْتَنَا إِنَّكَ
أَنْتَ الْعَلِيمُ الْحَكِيمُ، اَللّهُمَّ اِنْفَعْنَا بِمَا عَلَّمْتَنَا وَعَلَّمْنَا مَا يَنْفَعُنَا.

The basis for success in knowledge is to consider etiquette

When any work is undertaken according to its principles and etiquette, there is success in it. If the principles and etiquette are not considered, there is certainly some sort of deficiency or shortcoming in the task. You wish to acquire *'ilm-e-nubūwwat* (knowledge of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*) – there are certain principles and etiquette for it. You will have to be fully aware of all the etiquette and adhere strictly to them so that you may be able to acquire the many benefits of it.

The benefits of the etiquette of Hadīth

The student who adheres to the etiquette of the science of Hadīth will acquire four benefits:

1. The help of Allāh *ta'ālā*. And this is a major boon when seeking knowledge.

2. Success in the acquisition of knowledge.
3. The special colour and tone of this science will become manifest on you, and the effects of it will be clearly displayed.
4. Allāh *ta'ālā* will inspire you to convey this special colour to others.

From these few preliminary words, you must have realized the immense importance of these principles and etiquette. They can be divided into internal and external etiquette.

Internal etiquette

There are three internal etiquette:

1. There must be respect for this science in the hearts. You must be fully conscious of the fact that the knowledge which you are busy acquiring has come from Allāh *ta'ālā*; He is the source of this science. It contains the words and actions of our beloved Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*. No other science of this world can compare with it.
2. There must be love for this science. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* is our beloved, and everything associated to one's beloved must also be beloved. The words of the beloved are beloved, the actions of the beloved are beloved, every movement of the beloved is beloved, every speech of the beloved is beloved, and every written word of the beloved is beloved. The Ahādīth contain the words and actions of

Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam. So we have to love them.

3. Correction of your intention. This must be accompanied by continued renewal of your intention. Since this science is from among the sciences of the Hereafter, your objective must solely be to acquire benefits in the Hereafter. You must have the intention of obeying Allāh's laws and bringing people towards this. Acquisition of this world, wealth, position and authority should not be your objective.

Deprivation from the fragrance of Paradise

Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam said:

مَنْ تَعَلَّمَ عِلْمًا مِمَّا يُبْتَغَىٰ بِهِ وَجْهَ اللَّهِ لَا يَتَعَلَّمُهُ إِلَّا لِيُصِيبَ بِهِ عَرَضًا مِنَ الدُّنْيَا لَمْ يَجِدْ عَرْفَ الْجَنَّةِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ.¹

The person who seeks knowledge - which is normally acquired for Allāh's pleasure - solely to make it a means of acquiring of this world will not get the fragrance of Paradise on the day of Resurrection.

The sciences related to the Qur'ān, Hadīth, *fiqh* and Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam ought to have been studied solely for Allāh's *ta'ālā* pleasure. But here, the student is studying them to accumulate the possessions of this world, to get the praises of people, and to enjoy authority and position over others. In so doing, he has

¹ رواه أبو داؤد في العلم، ورواه أحمد في مسند أبي هريرة، ورواه ابن ماجه في السنة.

displayed serious ingratitude to this blessed knowledge. He ought to have studied it for Allāh's *ta'ālā* pleasure, but he is acquiring it for the sake of this despicable world. Because of this ingratitude of his, such a person will not even get the fragrance of Paradise on the day of Resurrection. This means that let alone not obtaining entry into Paradise, he will not be allowed to come near it as well.

My purpose of saying all this is to show that our intention has to be correct. After correcting our intention, we will have to constantly monitor it in the course of the year. It must be clear in our minds that this knowledge is connected to the Hereafter, so our objective must be solely for the Hereafter.

The objective of the science of Hadīth

Allāh *ta'ālā* conferred you with the honour of studying Hadīth. No matter how much gratitude you express, it will be less. The honourable '*ulamā*' explained several objectives for the study of this science. If we bear them in mind, it will be easy for us to correct our intention.

The first objective is to acquire the merits and virtues of studying it as explained in the blessed Ahādīth.

May Allāh keep the person hale and hearty
Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam said:

نَصَرَ اللهُ إِمْرًا سَمِعَ مَقَالِي فَوَعَاَهَا وَحَفِظَهَا وَبَلَّغَهَا

This Hadīth can be translated as a *du'ā'* and also as a statement. If it is a *du'ā'*, it will mean:

May Allāh ta'ālā keep hale and hearty the person who hears my words, memorizes and safeguards them, and then conveys them to others.

If it is taken as a statement, it will mean:

Allāh ta'ālā will keep such a person hale and hearty who hears my words, memorizes and safeguards them, and then conveys them to others.

Look at what an immense virtue! Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam is either informing us that Allāh ta'ālā will keep hale and hearty the person who hears his words, memorizes them, and conveys them to others; or, he is making *du'ā'* for such a person to remain hale and hearty. If it is a statement, it is a very great thing; and if it is a *du'ā'*, it is just as great. What a wonderful thing it is to obtain the *du'ā'* of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam!

¹رواه الترمذي في العلم.

The faces of the servants of Hadīth remain luminous

This is the reason why the faces of those who serve Hadīth remain luminous and effulgent. Some 'ulamā' say:

مَا مِنْ رَجُلٍ يَطْلُبُ الْحَدِيثَ إِلَّا كَانَ عَلَى وَجْهِهِ نَضْرَةٌ

Any person who seeks Hadīth has a special freshness and effulgence on his face.

So we can now make this intention that we are studying Hadīth because the person who remains occupied in it's study is kept hale, hearty, happy and effulgent by Allāh *ta'ālā*.

Those who were occupied with Hadīth will be closest to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* on the day of Resurrection

Now listen to another virtue: Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said:

أَوْلَى النَّاسِ بِي يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ أَكْثَرُهُمْ عَلَيَّ صَلَوَةً¹

Those who sent the most salutations to me shall be closest to me on the day of Resurrection.

Ibn Hibbān *rahimahullāh* says that there is very great virtue and merit in this for the Muḥaddithīn (Hadīth scholars), those occupied in the service of Hadīth, and those studying and teaching Hadīth. This is because they constantly send salutations (*durūd*) in abundance to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*. They read Hadīth, they

¹رواه الترمذي في الصلوة، ورواه ابن حبان في الأدعية.

translate it, they explain it, and the audience listens to it. Whenever the name of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam is mentioned, they send salutations to him. We do not know the countless number of times they send salutations in each Hadīth lesson.

The students of *Daurah Hadīth* read approximately 40 000 Ahādīth in the course of one year. We do not know how many times the blessed name of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam is mentioned in each Hadīth. Then look at the translation of that Hadīth, it's explanation and commentary, and the other Ahādīth which are brought in support of the opinions of the different juristical schools (*madhāhib*). From this, it will not be difficult to conclude that those who teach and study Hadīth make mention of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam the most. Obviously, they send the same number of salutations as well. Thus, the virtue mentioned in the above-quoted Hadīth will be enjoyed to the full by the Muhaddithīn and those occupied in teaching and studying Hadīth.

So we can make this intention as well: We are studying Hadīth because the one who is occupied in it's study sends salutations in abundance; and the one who sends salutations in abundance will be close to Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam on the day of Resurrection.

The Muhaddithīn are the deputies of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam

Imām Tabarānī rahimahullāh relates a Hadīth in his *Awsaṭ* from which we can gauge another

merit of studying Hadīth. Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam made this *du‘ā*:

اللَّهُمَّ ارْحَمْ خُلَفَائِي

O Allāh, have mercy on my khulafā’ (deputies).

The Sahābah radiyallāhu ‘anhum asked:

وَمَنْ خُلَفَاؤُكَ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ

Who are your khulafā’, O Rasūlullāh?

Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam replied:

الَّذِينَ يَرُونَنِي أَحَادِيثِي وَيُعَلِّمُونَهَا النَّاسَ

My khulafā’ are those who relate my Ahādīth and teach them to the people.

Qutb al-Aqtāb Shaykh al-Hadīth Hadrat Maulānā Muḥammad Zakarīyyā Sāhib rahimahullāh says that when a person receives *khilāfat* (deputyship) from a small insignificant shaykh, it is considered a most happy occasion, a remarkable feat, and there is much talk about it. On the other hand, those who study Hadīth and teach it to others have received *khilāfat* from Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam. He himself says that they are his *khulafā’*. What a distinguished position!

So we should make this intention as well: We are studying Hadīth to become eligible for this *du‘ā* of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam, and to

¹مجمع الزوائد، العلم، باب ما جاء في فضل العلم.

acquire the distinguished position of becoming his *khulafā'*.

Thus, the first objective which you must have is that you are studying Hadīth to acquire the virtues and merits of studying and teaching Hadīth as mentioned above.

Understanding of the Qur'ān – another objective for studying Hadīth

Another objective of studying Hadīth is to understand the Qur'ān and practise on it. The Qur'ān is the basis of the Sharī'ah. But it provides broad outlines, while the Hadīth explains it and provides details. Obviously, it is difficult to understand the main text without its commentary. We are therefore studying the pure Hadīth to get an understanding of the Qur'ān. And an understanding of the Qur'ān is the path to practising on it.

This is another intention which you ought to have: We are studying Hadīth so that we may get an understanding of the Qur'ān and, consequently, we will – *inshā Allāh* – also be able to practise on its teachings. We are thus studying Hadīth to understand the Qur'ān and to practise on it.

The joy of reading the words of the beloved

After explaining these two objectives, Hadrat Qutb al-Aqtāb Shaykh al-Hadīth Maulānā Muḥammad Zakariyyā Sāhib *rahimahullāh* says: Even if there was no other benefit in studying and teaching Hadīth, one benefit would have sufficed all. That is, it is the speech of our beloved. To

experience the joy of reading the words of our beloved is an objective in itself.

مَنْ أَحَبَّ شَيْئًا أَكْثَرَ ذِكْرُهُ

When a person loves something, he makes excessive mention of it.

It is not confined to the remembrance of the beloved, but everything which is connected to the beloved. His speech, his actions, his clothes, his writing, etc. In short, everything which has something or the other to do with the beloved. A poet says:

أَمْرُهُ عَلَى الدِّيَارِ دِيَارٍ لَيْلَى
أُقْبِلُ ذَا الْجِدَارِ وَذَا الْجِدَارِ
وَمَا حُبُّ الدِّيَارِ شَعْنٌ قَلْبِي
وَلَكِنْ حُبُّ مَنْ سَكَنَ الدِّيَارِ

When I pass by the district were Laylā lives, I kiss this wall and I kiss that wall. Love for this district has not occupied my heart, rather the love of the one who lives in this district.

So Hadrat Shaykh *rahimahullāh* says that if there was no other purpose for studying Hadīth, this one would suffice, i.e. it is the speech of our beloved Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam. Because we have love for him, we have love for his speech as well. This is why we are studying Hadīth.

Developing the status of the Sahābah *radiyallāhu ‘anhum*

The Muḥaddithīn state another objective in studying Ḥadīth, viz. the person who is occupied with it develops the status of the Sahābah *radiyallāhu ‘anhum*. The Sahābah *radiyallāhu ‘anhum* met Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam*, observed his actions, and became Sahābah. The person who is teaching and studying Ḥadīth is constantly reading and studying the way of life of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam*. He is observing how Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* used to stand up and move around just as the Sahābah *radiyallāhu ‘anhum* had observed him. The same applies to his manner of sitting, manner of going into *rukū’* (the bowing posture in *ṣalāh*), manner of prostrating, his social life, his transactions, his luminous face, his blessed character, his excellent mannerisms and so on.

Those who are occupied in the study and teaching of Ḥadīth are constantly observing every action of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam*: how he used to get up, how he used to sit, how he used to sleep, how he used to eat, how he used to wear his clothes, etc. Just as the Sahābah *radiyallāhu ‘anhum* became Sahābah by observing his way of life, the person occupied with Ḥadīth is constantly reading about his way of life. In this way, the latter develops the status of the Sahābah and is likened to them to a certain extent.

أَهْلُ الْحَدِيثِ هُمْ أَهْلُ النَّبِيِّ وَإِنْ
لَمْ يَصْحَبُوا نَفْسَهُ أَنْفَاسَهُ صَحَبُوا

Those occupied with Hadīth are the people of Rasūlullāh. Although they were not in his company, they are in the company of his way of life.

Hadīrat ‘Abdullāh ibn Mubārak *rahimahullāh* was asked: “You study and read in solitude, don’t you get bored?! Don’t you become weary?” He replied: “How can I get bored and tired when I am in the company of Rasūlullāh *s*allallāhu ‘alayhi wa *s*allam and the Sahābah *radiyallāhu ‘anhum!*?”

So those who are studying Hadīth are – in a way – in the company of Rasūlullāh *s*allallāhu ‘alayhi wa *s*allam. This is also an objective in studying Hadīth.

An important objective

While explaining the objective of the science of Hadīth, the author of *Miftāh as-Sa‘ādah* writes:

التَّحَلِّي بِالْآدَابِ النَّبَوِيَّةِ وَالتَّوَقِّي عَمَّا يَكْرَهُهُ وَيَنْهَاهُ

*Adorning one’s self with the mannerisms of Rasūlullāh *s*allallāhu ‘alayhi wa *s*allam and safeguarding one’s self from what he dislikes and forbids.*

We must try to imbibe the mannerisms, character and noble habits of Rasūlullāh *s*allallāhu ‘alayhi wa *s*allam; and safeguard ourselves from the things which he disliked and forbade.

This too is a very important objective in studying Hadīth. ‘Allāmah Kurmānī *rahimahullāh* expresses this objective as follows:

الْفُؤُزُ بِسَعَادَةِ الدَّارَيْنِ

The acquisition of success in both worlds.

Allāh *ta‘ālā* will confer success and prosperity in this world and in the Hereafter to the person who embellishes his self with the character of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam*, adorns his self with his mannerisms, and abstains from the things which he disliked or prohibited.

So ‘Allāmah Kurmānī *rahimahullāh* teaches us that the objective of studying Hadīth is:

الْفُؤُزُ بِسَعَادَةِ الدَّارَيْنِ

The acquisition of success in both worlds.

And when will a student achieve success in this? When he makes himself a manifestation of:

التَّحَلِّيَ بِالْأَدَابِ النَّبَوِيَّةِ وَالتَّوَقُّفِ عَمَّا يَكْرَهُهُ وَيَنْهَاهُ

*Adorning one’s self with the mannerisms of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* and safeguarding one’s self from what he dislikes and forbids.*

Thus, the correction of one’s intention is the third of the internal etiquette. One’s intention has to be correct, and it’s correctness has to be maintained. The heart must be cleansed of all impure motives, and embellished with pure motives. As we had said previously, because this knowledge belongs

to the Hereafter, and is connected to it, the objective too must be solely for benefit in the Hereafter.

External etiquette

Now let us discuss the external etiquette. The first is to spend all your energies and means for the acquisition of this science.

وَبِقَدْرِ الكَدِّ تُكْتَسَبُ المَعَالِي
فَمَنْ طَلَبَ العُلَى سَهَرَ اللَّيَالِي

Lofty levels and ranks are achieved according to the amount of striving and endeavouring. The one who desires loftiness will have to burn the midnight oil.

العِلْمُ عِزٌّ لَا ذُلَّ فِيهِ، يُحْصَلُ بِذُلٍّ لَا عِزَّ فِيهِ

Knowledge entails honour and nothing but honour. There is no humiliation in it. However, it is acquired by obliterating one's self, not by displaying one's greatness and authority.

We have to make full effort to acquire this science as it ought to be acquired. We must be able to develop total proficiency in it. We will have to spend all our energies, courage and means for it's acquisition. As much time as possible will have to be spent with it. Do it with the belief that this is the best avenue to spend my time. Never ever remain absent from the classes and lessons – neither physically nor mentally. You must be physically present in the class, and mentally as well. Let it not be that you are physically here, while your mind is wandering outside.

The following teaching of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam is most beneficial in this regard:

إِخْرَصْ عَلَى مَا يَنْفَعُكَ وَاسْتَعِزْ بِاللَّهِ وَلَا تَعْجِزْ¹

You must be desirous of what will benefit you, seek Allāh's assistance, and do not display weakness.

The science of Hadīth is most beneficial. We should therefore be most desirous of it. But we should not rely only on our efforts and endeavours. Rather, we should rely on Allāh's *ta'ālā* help. At the same time, we must not sit back idle, having lost all courage to strive. We must adopt all means for the acquisition of this blessed science.

لَوْ كَانَ هَذَا الْعِلْمُ يُدْرِكُ بِالْمُنَى

If this knowledge could be acquired by wishful thinking.

We should neither sit back, having lost all courage, nor should we rely on hopes and wishes. Rather, we should strive with concentration, and remain attached to it's acquisition. Without efforts, nothing can be achieved through mere wishful thinking.

¹رواه مسلم في القدر.

لَوْ كَانَ هَذَا الْعِلْمُ يُدْرَكُ بِالْمُحِي
لَا يَبْقَيْنَ عَلَى الْبَرِّيَّةِ جَاهِلٌ
فَاجْهَدْ وَلَا تَكْسَلْ وَلَا تَكُ غَافِلًا
فَنَدَامَةُ الْعُقْبَى لِمَنْ يَتَكَاسَلُ

If this knowledge could be acquired by wishful thinking, not a single ignorant person would remain on earth. So strive hard, do not be lazy, and do not be heedless. Regret at the end awaits the person who displays laziness.

If this knowledge could be acquired by wishful thinking, not a single ignorant person would remain on earth. This is because every person wishes he was a man of knowledge. If knowledge could have been acquired by hopes and desires:

لَا يَبْقَيْنَ عَلَى الْبَرِّيَّةِ جَاهِلٌ

not a single ignorant person would remain on earth.

Now that you have learnt that nothing can be acquired by mere wishful thinking,

فَاجْهَدْ وَلَا تَكْسَلْ وَلَا تَكُ غَافِلًا

So strive hard, do not be lazy, and do not be heedless.

فَنَدَامَةُ الْعُقْبَى لِمَنْ يَتَكَاسَلُ

Regret at the end awaits the person who displays laziness.

Imām Shāfi'ī *rahimahullāh* says:

لَا يُفْلِحُ مَنْ طَلَبَ هَذَا الْعِلْمَ بِالتَّمَلُّلِ وَغَيِّ النَّفْسِ

The one who seeks this knowledge while being lazy, lethargic, and independent cannot acquire this knowledge.

Students have to be very particular about safeguarding themselves against lethargy and boredom. They must study with real enthusiasm and eagerness. They must not become bored even when there is repetition in the lessons. Do not think: “This discussion which we are presently listening to in *Tirmidhī Sharīf* was done yesterday in *Abū Dā'ud Sharīf*. And the teacher is repeating the same thing which was explained by the teacher of *Abū Dā'ud Sharīf*. The juristical opinions which were given yesterday are being quoted today.”

My dear students! This repetition is certainly not devoid of benefit. Allāh *ta'ālā* bestowed each teacher a different ability and methodology of teaching. Although the discussion is the same, the manner of speech is different, the explanation is different, and the arrangement of the presentation is different. Allāh *ta'ālā* is actually most kind to us for having afforded us the opportunity of understanding something which was not understood in another lesson, to be understood in the present lesson. Or it was not thoroughly understood in the previous lesson, and will now be understood in the present lesson. Furthermore, the *nūr* (effulgence, light) of each place is different. In this way, the *anwār* (plural of

nūr) are being conveyed to us in different ways. Every person agrees that repetition is beneficial.

Nevertheless, we must neither become bored by repetition, nor by anything else. Instead, we must study with full enthusiasm and zeal. The person who gets bored and is lethargic is deprived of knowledge.

Similarly, the person who remains independent is also deprived of knowledge. For example, he has knowledge of a particular theme from before hand which is presently being explained by the teacher. He must still listen to it attentively, as a true student, with submission, and as if he is in need of the explanation. If he tries to study independently, he will be deprived.

لَا يُفْلِحُ مَنْ طَلَبَ هَذَا الْعِلْمَ بِالتَّمَلُّلِ وَغَيِّ النَّفْسِ

The one who seeks this knowledge while being lazy, lethargic, and independent cannot acquire this knowledge.

وَلَكِنْ مَنْ طَلَبَ بِذُلَّةِ النَّفْسِ وَضَيْقِ الْعَيْشِ وَخِدْمَةِ الْعِلْمِ أَفْلَحَ

Yes, the one who acquires it with humility, submission, constricted living, and service to knowledge will certainly be successful.

The one who abstains from pride, chooses humility, obliterates his self, bears every type of bitterness and hardship, eats the food which he receives [without complaining], drinks whatever he gets, sits wherever he gets a place, serves his teachers, his *madrasah*, and his fellow students, and conveys the knowledge which he acquired to

others – then according to Imām Shāfi‘ī *rahimahullāh*, such a student will certainly be successful.

My dear students! You must make a firm resolution to spend all your energies, courage and means for the sake of this knowledge. You will have to spend all your time for it. You will not be vexed by any hardship along the way. If you resolve to make such sacrifices, you will get a little share of knowledge.

Knowledge is miserly

الْعِلْمُ شَحِيحٌ، لَا يُعْطِيكَ بَعْضَهُ حَتَّى تُعْطِيَهُ كُلَّكَ

Knowledge is very miserly. It will not give you a portion of it's self until you give it your full self.

Knowledge cannot be acquired with bodily comforts

Hadrat Imām Muslim *rahimahullāh* quotes a statement of Imām Yaḥyā ibn Kathīr *rahimahullāh*:

لَا يُسْتَطَاعُ الْعِلْمُ بِرَاحَةِ الْجِسْمِ

Knowledge cannot be acquired with bodily comforts.

You will have to sacrifice everything for this knowledge. Consider knowledge to be the best place where you can spend your time. Never remain absent from your classes.

Hadrat Maulānā Yahyā Sāhib's *rahimahullāh* attention to classes

Hadrat Maulānā Yahyā Sāhib *rahimahullāh* was the father of Hadrat Shaykh al-Ḥadīth Maulānā Muḥammad Zakarīyyā Sāhib *rahimahullāh*. He says about his self: “I was so particular about attending my classes [as a student] that I did not miss a single Ḥadīth [in the course of my studies].”

Hadrat Shaykh *rahimahullāh* also relates his own experiences: “I had a class mate by the name of Husayn Aḥmad, and we were both studying Ḥadīth under my respected father *rahimahullāh*. The two of us made an agreement not to allow ourselves to miss a single Ḥadīth, and not to listen to any Ḥadīth lesson without *wudū'*. If any one of us had the need to relieve his self, he would knock the other with his knee and leave the class. In the meantime, the other [who was still seated in the class] would immediately pose a question [to the teacher]. The other who had left to relieve his self would complete the task at hand as quickly as possible, [perform *wudū'*] and return to class.”

Hadrat Shaykh *rahimahullāh* adds: “When this happened a few times, my respected father realized what we were doing. One day when my class mate left to perform *wudū'*, I posed a question by saying: ‘But ‘Allāmah Ibn al-Humām *rahimahullāh* says such and such a thing in *Fath al-Qadīr*.’ My father said: ‘Where do we have the time to argue with you over your Ibn al-Humām? While we are waiting for your friend to return,

listen to this story.’ Subsequently, it became my father’s habit that whenever any of us had to leave the class to perform *wudū’*, my father would relate some story or the other to us.”

My dear students! Look at how much importance they gave to their lessons. You must always have this concern of not allowing yourself to miss a single Hadīth, and not to study it without *wudū’*.

Study Hadīth while in a state of *wudū’*

From the above story, we learn that paying particular attention to purity is an etiquette in itself. Abū Ismā’īl al-Anṣārī al-Harawī *rahimahullāh* relates from Hadrat Qatādah *rahimahullāh* who said: “It is considered *mustahab* (desirable) for a person who is teaching or studying Hadīth to enter [the class] after having purified his self.”

Apply perfume

Another etiquette for the student of Hadīth is to apply perfume if he is able to afford it. It is related with regard to Imām Mālik *rahimahullāh* that if anyone came to ask him a ruling about a particular matter, he would give an answer immediately. But if the question was with regard to the science of Hadīth, he would go into his house, take a bath, wear good clothes, apply perfume, proceed to Musjid-e-Nabawī, sit in his allocated place, explain the Hadīth with full respect and decorum, and reply to the person’s question. Students of Hadīth must bear this in mind as well.

Study the preliminary sciences before studying Hadīth

Another etiquette is to study the preliminary and primary sciences before studying Hadīth. The student must study *nahw* and *sarf* (Arabic grammar and etymology) so that he does not err in reading and translating the Arabic texts. If a student errs in these matters, he will be attributing incorrect things to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam*. And it is a major sin to attribute incorrect things to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam*. Imām Bukhārī *rahimahullāh* quotes a Hadīth in *Kitāb al-‘Ilm* wherein Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* said:

مَنْ يُثْنِ عَلَيَّ مَا لَمْ أَقُلْ فَلْيَسْبُوا مَقْعَدَهُ مِنَ النَّارِ

The person who attributes to me something which I did not say must prepare his abode in the Hell-fire.

Read the text correctly

The imām of language, Imām Aṣmu‘ī *rahimahullāh*, says: “The person who reads the text of a Hadīth incorrectly may well fall under the above-mentioned warning [of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam*]. This is because reading incorrectly is synonymous to “something which I did not say”.

This is why it is important to study the preliminary sciences and to be particular about how the text is read. Students of the initial years must work very hard in *nahw* and *sarf* so that when they study Hadīth, they do not err when

reading, translating, and explaining it. Also remember, the good fortune of reading the texts is enjoyed by the person whose reading is correct. So work hard in this regard.

Another etiquette

Another etiquette is that when mentioning the names of Allāh *ta'ālā*, Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*, the Sahābah *radiyallāhu 'anhum*, and the erudite Imāms *rahimahumullāh*, then mention them with the appellations of respect. When taking the name of Allāh *ta'ālā*, add *ta'ālā, jalla jalāluhu wa 'amma nawāluhu*, etc. When mentioning the name of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*, make sure you say *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*. When mentioning the name of a Sahābī or Sahābiyah, add the words *radiyallāhu 'anhu* or *radiyallāhu 'anhā*. When taking the names of the Imāms, add the words *rahimahullāh*.

Do not have the slightest whisper of a scorn in your heart for any of the Imāms, irrespective of who they are.

Mention your teacher with respect

Similarly, when you mention the name of your teacher or shaykh, use words which are suited to his position and rank. This is because he is your first link [in the chain of Hadīth transmissions]. Hadrat Masrūq *rahimahullāh* is a Tābi'i who was a student of Hadrat 'Ā'ishah Siddiqah *radiyallāhu 'anhā*. When he used to narrate from her, he used to refer to her in the following manner:

حَدَّثَنِي الصَّدِّيقَةُ بِنْتُ الصِّدِّيقِ حَبِيبَةَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ

As-Siddīqah bint as-Siddīq ('Ā'ishah, the daughter of Abū Bakr), the beloved [wife] of the beloved of Allāh ta'ālā, ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam related to me.

Look at the respect which he had for his teacher, Hadrat 'Ā'ishah Siddīqah radiyallāhu 'anhā.

When Imām Abū Muslim Khaulānī *rahimahullāh* relates from his teacher, 'Auf ibn Muslim *rahimahullāh*, he refers to him as follows:

حَدَّثَنِي الْحَبِيبُ الْأَمِينُ عَوْفُ بْنُ مُسْلِمٍ

My beloved trustworthy teacher, 'Auf ibn Muslim, related to me.

We have to practise on Hadīth

Another important point is to practise on those Ahādīth which are related to acts of worship and actions. This is the zakāh of Hadīth. Hadrat Bishr Hāfi rahimahullāh used to say:

يَا أَهْلَ الْحَدِيثِ أَذُّوا زَكَاةَ الْحَدِيثِ

O you who are occupied with Hadīth. Pay the zakāh of Hadīth.

How should the zakāh of Hadīth be paid? He says further on:

فَاعْمَلُوا مِنْ كُلِّ مِائَتَيْنِ بِخَمْسَةِ أَحَادِيثَ

For every two hundred Ahādīth you learn, you should practise on at least five.

We should therefore try our utmost to practise on those Ahādīth which are related to acts of worship and actions. Look at our pious elders! Hadrat Imām Ahmad ibn Hambal rahimahullāh says:

مَا كَتَبْتُ حَدِيثًا إِلَّا وَقَدْ عَمَلْتُ بِهِ

I did not record any such Hadīth which I did not practise on.

He says further on:

حَتَّى مَرَّ بِي أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ اخْتَجَمَ وَأَعْطَى أَبَا طَيِّبَةَ الْحُجَّامَ دِينَارًا

So much so, when I came across this Hadīth wherein it is stated that Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam went for cupping and paid the cupper, Abū Taybah, one dīnār

فَاخْتَجَمْتُ وَأَعْطَيْتُ الْحُجَّامَ دِينَارًا

I also went for cupping and paid the cupper one dīnār.

Ibrāhīm ibn Ismā'īl rahimahullāh says:

كُنَّا نَسْتَعِينُ عَلَى حِفْظِ الْحَدِيثِ بِالْعَمَلِ

We used to memorize Hadīth by practising on it.

When a person practises on a Hadīth, obviously, it will remain protected with him by virtue of practising on it. For example, you learnt that when you enter a musjid, you must enter with the right foot, read Bismillāh, send salutations to Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam, and then read the following du'a':

اللَّهُمَّ افْتَحْ لِي أَبْوَابَ رَحْمَتِكَ

O Allāh! Open for me the doors of Your mercy.

Obviously, if the person who practises on these Sunnah acts is asked about the Sunnah method of entering a masjid, he will ponder over his own actions and think about how he enters a masjid. He will recall that he enters with his right foot. So he will say: “The first Sunnah is to enter with your right foot.” He will recall that he reads *Bismillāh*, so he will say: “You must then read *Bismillāh*.” He will recall that he then sends salutations to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* by saying:

الصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى رَسُولِ اللَّهِ

Salutations and peace to Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam.

So he will say: “The third Sunnah is to send salutation to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam*.” He will recall that he then reads:

اللَّهُمَّ افْتَحْ لِي أَبْوَابَ رَحْمَتِكَ

O Allāh! Open for me the doors of Your mercy.

So he will say: “The fourth Sunnah is to read the *du‘ā*’ before entering a masjid.”

This is why Imām Wakī‘ *rahimahullāh* says:

إِذَا أَرَدْتَ أَنْ تَحْفَظَ الْحَدِيثَ فَاعْمَلْ بِهِ

If you really want to memorize a Hadith, practise on it.

Respect for one's teacher

Respect for one's teacher is another etiquette. The centre of respect is the heart. You should therefore have a lot of respect for your teacher in your heart.

Imām Bukhārī *rahimahullāh* says with regard to Imām Yahyā ibn Ma'īn *rahimahullāh*:

مَا رَأَيْتُ أََوْقَرَ لِلْمُحَدِّثِينَ مِنْ يَحْيَى بْنِ مَعِينٍ

I have not come across anyone more respectful to the Muhaddithīn than Yahyā ibn Ma'īn.

It is very saddening to note that the respect which we ought to be according to our teachers is not found in today's times. If it is found, it is superficial. Remember! Respect to the teacher is actually respect to knowledge. If your teacher is teaching you any science of the Qur'ān and you are respectful to him, then you are being respectful to the Qur'ān. If he is teaching Hadīth, then respect to him is actually respect to Hadīth. Imām Bayhaqī *rahimahullāh* quotes a statement of Hadrat 'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* wherein he says:

تَوَاضَعُوا لِمَنْ تَعَلَّمُونَ مِنْهُ

Be humble before the one from whom you are learning.

The Muḥaddith, Mughīrah *rahimahullāh*, used to say:

كُنَّا نُهَابُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ كَهَيْبَةِ الْأَمِيرِ

We used to be in awe of our teacher, Ibrāhīm, just as subjects are in awe of their leader.

Hadrat ‘Alī *radiyallāhu ‘anhu* says:

أَنَا عَبْدٌ مَنْ عَلَّمَنِي حَرْفًا، إِنْ شَاءَ بَاعَ وَإِنْ شَاءَ أَعْتَقَ

I am the slave of the one who taught me a single letter. He has the right to either sell me, or free me.

Abū ‘Ubaydah Qāsim ibn Salām *rahimahullāh* says:

مَا دَقَّقْتُ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ بَابَهُ قَطُّ لِقَوْلِهِ تَعَالَى: وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ صَبَرُوا حَتَّى تَخْرُجَ إِلَيْهِمْ لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَّهُمْ.

Whenever I went to study under any Muḥaddith, I never knocked on his door (instead, I always waited for him to come out of his house). I did this because of Allāh’s instruction: “Had they remained patient till you went out to them, it would have been better for them.”

Respect the instruments of knowledge

All the instruments of knowledge and the different means of acquiring it must also be accorded consideration and respect. Whether it is a pen, your books, your teachers, your classroom, your fellow students, or the *madrasah*.

Good conduct with fellow students

Good conduct with one's fellow students is also among the etiquette of seeking knowledge. The lowest level of this conduct is to abstain from causing any harm or discomfort to anyone.

Another important point to bear in mind is that you must consider the teacher who has been appointed to teach you a certain book to be the most beneficial teacher for that book.

Desire to spread knowledge

Another important etiquette is to have a desire to spread whatever knowledge you have acquired. You must always be concerned about conveying to others whatever knowledge you have acquired. You must commence this with your fellow students. Whenever any class mate comes to you for revision or to ask you to explain something, you must explain it to him. You must then broaden this circle to include those of your locality. When any residents of your locality come to you, you must explain to them. Then, whenever any opportunity is afforded to you to speak about the *Dīn*, you must seize it.

The tribulation of miserliness with knowledge

When a person is miserly with his knowledge, does not explain where he has to, does not help when his help is sought – then these are signs of wasting away and losing his knowledge.

Hadrat ‘Abdullāh ibn Mubārak *rahimahullāh* says:

مَنْ بَخِلَ بِالْعِلْمِ أُبْتُلِيَ بِثَلَاثٍ: إِمَّا أَنْ يَمُوتَ فَيَذْهَبَ عِلْمُهُ، أَوْ يَنْسِيَ، أَوْ يَتَّبِعَ السُّلْطَانَ.

A person who is miserly with knowledge is tested by one of the following three: (1) he will pass away without people benefiting from his knowledge, (2) he will forget whatever knowledge he has, (3) he will become attached to some worldly-minded person (and become engrossed with worldly matters). His knowledge will not benefit him in the Hereafter.

There should neither be shyness nor haughtiness in acquiring knowledge

Another point to bear in mind is that a student should neither be shy nor haughty when acquiring knowledge. Sometimes, a person does not ask a question out of shyness. And sometimes he does not ask because he is too proud. Sometimes, shyness is an obstacle to posing a question. The person thinks to himself: “If I were to ask the question, I will be disgraced before the rest of the class. Or, the teacher is busy at the moment, and he will be disturbed.”

Sometimes, pride prevents a person from asking a question. He thinks to himself: “If I were to ask a question, my status among the rest will drop. They will think that I do not even understand that much!?”

Imām Mujāhid *rahimahullāh* says:

لَا يَنَالُ الْعِلْمَ مُسْتَحِيٌّ وَلَا مُسْتَكْبِرٌ

A person who is shy and the one who is proud cannot acquire knowledge.

Take advice from your teacher

You must constantly take advice from and consult your teacher, especially in matters related to your *Dīnī* and academic matters. This results in a lot of blessings in one's knowledge, and a person is able to get a correct direction in life.

Be particular about praiseworthy characteristics

You have to be very particular about having praiseworthy characteristics. Make an effort to have lofty character, the highest level of noble-mindedness, and be embellished with superior mannerisms.

Imām Abū 'Āṣim an-Nabī *rahimahullāh* who was a shaykh of Imām Bukhārī *rahimahullāh* says:

مَنْ طَلَبَ هَذَا الْحَدِيثَ طَلَبَ أَعْلَى أُمُورِ الدِّينِ، فَيَجِبُ أَنْ يَكُونَ خَيْرَ النَّاسِ.

The one who is studying Hadīth is studying the loftiest matters of Dīn. (Since he is acquiring such a lofty thing), it is essential for him to live as the best of human beings.

Pen down your lessons

The last etiquette which I would like to add is that you must always pen down and record your lessons. By writing down what you are learning, you are safeguarding – to a certain extent – your knowledge.

مَا كُتِبَ قَرَّرَ وَمَا لَا يُكْتَبُ فَرَّ

The thing which is penned is protected. The thing which is not penned, escapes.

الْعِلْمُ صَيْدٌ وَالْكِتَابَةُ قَيْدُهُ، قَيْدُ صَيْدِكَ بِالْقَيْدِ الْوَاتِقَةِ

Knowledge is the hunt, and writing it down is the means of confining it. Bind your hunts with strong and firm ropes.

When writing down a lesson, abstain from being selective. You must write down everything which the teacher says. Imām Yahyā ibn Ma'in rahimahullāh says:

صَاحِبُ الْإِنْتِخَابِ يَنْدَمُ

The person who is selective in his writing will regret later.

Sometimes, a certain point is very important. But a student thought it to be insignificant, so he did not pen it. Later on when he needed this point, he could not find it. This will cause him pain and regret. Hadrat 'Abdullāh ibn Mubārak rahimahullāh writes his personal experience:

مَا انْتَحَيْتُ عَلَى عَالِمٍ إِلَّا نَدِمْتُ

Whenever I sat before a scholar and was selective in penning what he said (by writing certain points and leaving out others), I regretted it later (had I written everything, it would have helped me today).

Abū Hātim *rahimahullāh* says:

إِذَا كَتَبْتَ فَكَمِّمْشْ، وَإِذَا حَدَّثْتَ فَفَتِّشْ

When you write, write everything down. When you speak, be selective and say the things which are established.

Continuity is essential

These are a few etiquette which were explained to you. May Allāh *ta'ālā* first of all inspire me to practise, all of you who are present, and all the female students as well. These have not been mentioned merely to be heard. They are to be remembered and practised upon. They do not apply to the students of *Daurah Hadīth* alone, but to all seekers of knowledge.

My dear students! In the beginning of the year, there is normally a desire to practise on the etiquette. But gradually this desire wanes. These etiquette and principles ought to be for our entire lives. I had related this incident to you previously: Imām Sarakhsī *rahimahullāh* had diarrhoea one night. He went repeatedly to relieve himself. He had to go to the toilet seventy times. How weak he must have become!? Despite this, after each time, he occupied himself in studying once again. He was so desirous of knowledge that he could not leave it aside. He went to the toilet seventy times, but occupied himself in his studies each time he came out. He also performed *wudū'* seventy times in that single night! He did not touch his books without *wudū'*. By virtue of this respect, Allāh *ta'ālā* conferred Imām Sarakhsī *rahimahullāh*

with a position which left the world astounded. The king of the time was displeased by his words of advice, so he imprisoned him in a well. His students would assemble around the well at an appointed time, and he would teach them while he was in the depths of the well. He had no books whatsoever with him. But whatever he dictated to his students from the depths of that well were later compiled into a book of fifteen volumes. It is Imām Sarakhsī's *rahimahullāh* magnum opus which is known as *al-Mabsūt*. The extent of his knowledge and his powerful memory were products of his etiquette.

My dear students! Knowledge comes with etiquette and respect. The one who is particular in this regard acquires knowledge.

مَنْ لَا أَدَبَ لَهُ، لَا عِلْمَ لَهُ

The one who has no etiquette has no knowledge.

The one who has good etiquette, he has gained.
The one who does not, he has lost.

طُرُقُ الْعِشْقِ كُلُّهَا آدَابٌ
أَدَّبُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ أَيُّهَا الْأَصْحَابُ

The paths of love [for Allāh] are all confined to etiquette. O friends! Imbibe etiquette and good character within yourselves.

The path of knowledge is also the path of love through which we reach Allāh *ta'ālā* and gain proximity to our beloved Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*. Without etiquette, these things can never be acquired.

وَآخِرُ دَعْوَانَا أَنِ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ
وَصَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى نَبِيِّنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى أَصْحَابِهِ أَجْمَعِينَ

Our final supplication is that all praise belongs to Allāh, the *Rabb* of the worlds. Salutations to our Prophet Muḥammad and all his Companions.



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May Allāh *ta'ālā* accept this humble effort, and may He make it a means for our salvation in this world and the Hereafter. Āmīn.

رَبَّنَا تَقَبَّلْ مِنَّا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ، وَتُبْ عَلَيْنَا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ

I request the reader to inform me of any mistakes, typographical errors, etc. in this translation. Constructive criticism and suggestions on how to improve this work are most welcome. I can be contacted via e-mail: maulanamahomedy@gmail.com

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